

*Civilian Intelligence<sup>1</sup> in Communist Poland, 1945-1989*  
*An Attempt at a General Outline*

*Andrzej Paczkowski*  
**Institute of Political Studies  
and Collegium Civitas, Warsaw**

In accordance with a statute of 1998, the National Remembrance Institute (IPN) took over the archives of the former special services and security apparatus and the Intelligence documents from 1945-1989 are starting to become accessible. I use the word “starting” since the transfer of these records lasted until the end of 2004, and their organization is far from complete. It should not come as a surprise, therefore, that only a handful of people have managed to use them in their new site. An additional obstacle relates to the fact that a portion of these documents continues to be secured with the “confidential” clause, and thus only persons possessing a special “security certificate” enjoy access. Yet another difficulty is in the fact that the process of accessing the archives of the National Remembrance Institute often takes several weeks. Despite devoting a lot of time to conducting a survey in the Institute collections in the course of the last year, and enjoying the additional privilege of having at my disposal the “security certificate” as well as being a member of the IPN Board, I am still unable to determine the size of the Intelligence collections. They certainly comprise thousands of archival units, some of which are composed of multiple volumes.

Consequently, the following paper is only an initial “reconnaissance,” which I conducted by resorting to a maneuver resembling that of the knight on a chessboard – by “jumping” across different years and domains of Intelligence functions, with distinct references to the early period (1945-1965). This terrain proved to be extremely interesting but, at the same time, enormously complicated from the viewpoint of research. Some quandaries stem from the fact that the collections of documents will for long remain un-catalogued according to the principles to which historians have become accustomed. Another predicament lies in the fact that the period of systemic transformation (from early autumn 1989 to the summer of 1990) was not only a time when operational records were destroyed in accordance with the standard procedure of operation archives, but also a time when a mass-scale liquidation of current operation, information and administrative documents took place (chiefly from the 1980s). The range of this destruction has still not been estimated, but it was certainly conducted on a very wide scale. Despite the ensuing gaps we may say with full confidence that using the resources of Intelligence archival material in the hands of the IPN will introduce a breakthrough in studying the history of the Intelligence, as in the case with research dealing with the (internal) security apparatus.

There is no general publication on the history of the Intelligence services in communist Poland, moreover it is interesting to note that even training courses intended for Intelligence officers did not devote much attention to the past. I have managed to find only a very general textbook, entitled: *Wybrane zagadnienia z historii wywiadu MSW* (Selected Problems from the History of the Ministry of Internal Affairs Intelligence) and issued in 1987. The only synthetic outline of the history of the entire security apparatus, published after 1989, never mentions Intelligence.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, copious Polish-language monographs about the Intelligence service, both of the inter-war period and the World War II (including the Home Army Intelligence), have appeared in the course of the last ten years.

True, individual documents and fragmentary information can be discovered in scarce publications, but they do not create a logical whole.<sup>3</sup> This is not to say that nothing has been written about the Polish Intelligence. Nonetheless, for all practical purposes, existing literature is composed of not much more than ten titles, and constitutes reminiscences or is based on accounts made without

access to the archives. In addition, some of those recollections have appeared in fictional form<sup>4</sup>, while others, including those by such prominent persons as the ministers and vice-ministers of internal affairs (Czesław Kiszczyk, Władysław Pożoga, Franciszek Szlachcic) frequently cite single facts, but are devoid of details of operations or even names. The same can be said about those publications about Polish civilian Intelligence, which have appeared abroad. They do not contain a single study founded on sources, and basically deal with defectors, such as Janusz Kochański<sup>5</sup> or Henryk Goleniewski.<sup>6</sup> Poles are also mentioned in assorted books about the Soviet Intelligence (i.e. a. by Thierry Wolton), but already Ernest Volkman, author of the popular *Spies. The Secret Agents Who Changed the Course of History* (1994) did not enumerate a single Pole, not even Ryszard Kukliński. Could it be that Poles are considered unfit for the part of spies and Intelligence agents? I believe that such a conclusion would be excessively rash, nonetheless not many authors have written about this particular role. In other words, we have at our disposal multiple scattered pieces of a puzzle, but for the time being, do not have the opportunity for putting them together.

Polish civilian Intelligence was formally established on 28 December 1944 as the Intelligence Division in the Ministry of Public Security. Half a year later its name was changed to the Second Independent Division, and its head (from 21 July) was Juliusz Burgin,<sup>7</sup> who actually created the foundations of the Polish intelligence framework. Initially, this was “shallow intelligence.”, which had emerged for the purpose of organizing work in terrains still occupied by the Third Reich. Only after the end of wartime hostilities did the Division set up four territorial sections: North European (Great Britain, The Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden and Finland), West European (Belgium, France, Spain, Switzerland and Italy), South European (Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Yugoslavia, Rumania and Hungary) and Central European (Germany and Austria). Apparently, the range was limited to the Old Continent, a fact that seems worthy of emphasis: countries, which had found themselves within the Soviet sphere of influence, were treated on par with “capitalist” states. I do not have at my disposal information about the number of the functionaries in the headquarters, residents working abroad or agents. It seems, however, that Burgin worked energetically. By way of example, outside Poland he created a net of trade enterprises which were supposed to act as a “cover” for the residents, and took certain steps to put to use such Polish enterprises as the “Orbis” Travel Agency and Bank Pekao SA, which had branches abroad.<sup>8</sup> Suffice to say that in March 1946 the Division already employed 129 persons (including 65 operations officers)<sup>9</sup> and had at its disposal several residents within the diplomatic and consular apparatus. Efforts were initiated for expanding the scope of activity so as to include the United States and Canada. Withdrawal from the Soviet bloc states was completed in 1948. Alongside the territorial sections an important part was played by the Studies Bureau, which collected, analyzed and compiled information. Among the 13 sections into which the Bureau had been divided, special attention is due to those dealing with emigration (not only Polish but also Ukrainian), the Vatican, and Jewish questions. The first two domains were to constitute the *differentia specifica* of the Polish services. This was the time of establishing a liaison service, i.e. a. a cipher section, the beginnings of the operational technique unit, operational files, and a small disinformation unit. The tasks of the Division also included protecting Polish diplomatic posts.

The summer of 1947 coincided with a situation rather exceptional in the history of modern intelligence: a merger of the Army and civilian services. True, similar unification took place at more or less the same time in Moscow, but there the resultant *Komitet po Informatsii* became a superior coordinating agency, while Poland witnessed a personal union of the heads of both services: the chief of the Second Division of the General Staff, General Waclaw Komar<sup>10</sup>, became simultaneously the head of the Seventh Department of the Ministry of Public Security, based on the heretofore Second Independent Division. I have been unable to find documents describing the motives of this decision, or whether there were consultations in Moscow, although it seems improbable that such a serious change was not presented to the Soviet leaders.<sup>11</sup> We may, however, suggest a hypothesis that either Warsaw or Moscow simply recognized that such a merger would ensure greater efficiency.

The union did not involve creating a new uniform institution, but combining certain sections, i.e. a. recruitment, files, analysis and operation technique, while, at the same time, permitting both organisms to act as individually subjects. "Mixed" residents who, depending on the country and the main trends of interests, were headed by a Second Division officer or a Seventh Department functionary, were established "in the field", i.e. abroad. I have been unable to determine whether or not, and to what degree, did the scope of both intelligence services changed, or whether the earlier friction between them had abated. At any rate, the civilian part was markedly enlarged, and at the beginning of 1949 totaled already 259 functionaries and contract workers in the headquarters alone.<sup>12</sup> A report about the first quarter of 1949 shows that the spy network was composed of 139 agents and five informants<sup>13</sup>, whose distribution demonstrates that Polish intelligence still focused on Europe: the largest number of agents worked in the Western occupation zones in Germany and Berlin – 47, the United Kingdom – 29, France – 26, Italy – 21, and Austria – 7. Israel, with as many as 16 agents, could be also regarded as part of the European theatre, and there were only two agents (and two informants) working in the USA, and one each in Mexico and Argentina. I do not have reliable data about the actual activity of this network, or even the sort of material received by the civilian part of the joint intelligence services. The agents concentrated on penetrating Polish political émigrés, and to a large extent included local (especially in Italy) and Polish communists, frequently of Jewish decent. This fact did not facilitate activity, especially among the émigrés, but it is worth remembering that up to 1947 communist parties in certain countries (such as France and Italy) were not only very influential, but acted as members of coalition governments. In 1948 work was initiated (starting with Berlin) on creating an illegal network ("N"), whose residents remained outside official Polish posts; this experiment ultimately failed.

One of the important symptoms of the activity pursued by the joint Intelligence services were trade ventures based on posts established by Burgin as early as 1946. The Central Committee of the communist party, which received part of the revenues, joined the "company." In 1948 the mother-firm in Warsaw added was followed by posts in Berlin ("Dimex"), Frankfurt ("Welthandel") and Vienna ("Polcommerce") as well as purchase representatives in Belgium and the United States.<sup>14</sup> The trading concern specialized in the sale of Polish food and the import of products and raw material affected by the embargo or bought at lower prices. It also trafficked in currency. All told, in 1947-1949 the enterprise made a profit of about 2,7 million dollars and ca. 7.6 million zlotys, but I do not know whether the revenue was divided between the partners. I have also been unable to find out whether such firms were used as "covers" for the residents or as safe houses, or whether their only function was to make money. It is certain that while liquidating the operation at the beginning of 1950 the Viennese firm was passed on to the Communist Party of Austria.

An operation of an entirely different sort, performed in 1948-1950 by the joint forces of both services, involved assistance rendered to Greek communist partisans, with Poland acting as the coordinator for all those communist states (with the exception of the Soviet Union) which did not border with Greece. A report presented on 19 January 1950 to Bolesław Bierut, the first secretary of the party, shows that from November 1948 to January 1950 - during the closing phase of the civil war - Polish Merchant Navy ships delivered 14,400 tons of military equipment (including almost 700 armored vehicles) and 30,200 tons of food, while Polish airplanes carried about 20 tons of chiefly medical aid.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, from 1947, Polish trains going via Belgrade brought large supplies of weapons, ammunition (partly from post-German supplies), assorted equipment, medical aid and food.<sup>16</sup> From July 1949 to January 1950 Polish ships evacuated almost 14,000 persons from Greece, and a hospital for the wounded (almost 1,600 patients) was set up in Poland. The organization and protection of the transports were entrusted mainly to Army Intelligence.

In May 1949 supreme Party authorities focused their attention on the activity of both services, and especially the Second Division.<sup>17</sup> The opinions proved to be rather negative. Several months later, Colonel Zygmunt Okręć, Komar's deputy in the Seventh Department, presented Jakub Berman, the

closest coworker of Bierut, with a *Notatka informacyjna* (Information Note),<sup>18</sup> in which he did not spare the intelligence apparatus. Okręś declared that an “overwhelming majority” of people holding top positions among the leadership “had worked before and during the war outside Poland and the Soviet Union; this is the reason why we are not thoroughly acquainted with members of this group”..” According to Okręś, who had spent the war in the USSR, the posts in question were taken over by the “dąbrowszczacy,”<sup>19</sup> “the French,” “the Swiss,” “Palestinians,” and “Mexicans” as well as a “tightly knit group of prewar professional officers” employed in the Second Division. The overall effect, he claimed, resembled that of the prewar “Legionnaire clique.”<sup>20</sup> In September, the Party leadership decided to divide the two intelligence services, to conduct a verification of all persons fulfilling responsible functions in the Seventh Department, and to carry out a survey of the whole cadre of both services. Apparently, this decision was connected with a campaign of “tracking the internal enemy,” carried out in all the European communist states. When in November a session of the Plenum of the Central Committee vehemently condemned the “renegades” (some of whom had been already imprisoned), and called for intensifying vigilance, the Central Committee expelled Władysław Gomułka, the former secretary general, and several of his closest coworkers from the time of wartime conspiracy, including Marian Spychalski, vice-minister of national defense, who was the actual supervisor of the Second Division. Shortly before this session, Konstanty (Konstantin) Rokossowski, a Soviet Marshal of Polish descent, was appointed minister of defense and embarked on a purge of the Army.

The “divorce” between civilian and army intelligence was completed during the first months of 1950. Komar was dismissed and transferred “to the sidelines”, and a Soviet officer was appointed the new head of the Second Division. On 1 June, the post of the director of the Seventh Department was assumed by Witold Sienkiewicz, delegated from the Party apparatus, a man without “Chekist” experience but well trusted by Moscow.<sup>21</sup> At the time when Sienkiewicz was being installed in his office, the already raging “purge” led to the discharge of more than half of the functionaries – 185 out of a total of 359,<sup>22</sup> a fact which temporarily totally halted all intelligence work. In contrast to the Second Division, however, the victims did not find themselves in prison. It now became necessary to train new functionaries with the assistance of the Soviet side, and to exchange almost all the agents. The refurbished intelligence service was quickly entrusted with important tasks, as evidenced by the fact that the heads of the Ministry decided that the Department was to offer more than 550 full time jobs, including about 170 in posts abroad. In reality, at the end of 1950 it employed 288 persons in the headquarters and 106 in postings.<sup>23</sup> An additional problem had been created by several cases of defection and the annihilation of the network of residents and agents in France - the outcome of a mass-scale retaliation in the wake of the arrest and court trial of French citizens accused of espionage (the so-called Robineau and Bassaler cases). Consequently, the activity of residents not only in France but also in Great Britain and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) was suspended, and “the salvaged spy network was frozen.”<sup>24</sup> In 1951, the network employed only 19 agents, of whom 11 worked in the FRG<sup>25</sup>. For all practical purposes, the intelligence service had become nonexistent.

This uproar imposed - but also facilitated - serious reorganization lasting until 1954. Particularly noteworthy undertakings included: 1) The creation of a distinct division dealing with illegal activity; 2) The establishment of a separate scientific-technical intelligence division; 3) The acceptance of the principle that the agent network should be recruited outside communist parties and, as far it was possible, among people of non-Polish descent; 4) The introduction of intelligence functionaries into domestic, i.e. the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and trade headquarters, where they worked “under cover”; 5) The exploitation of persons on short official trips abroad; 6) The recruitment of foreigners coming to Poland for commercial, cultural or scientific purposes.

As a result, it became possible not only to considerably enlarge the personnel (in the spring of 1954 284 persons were employed on full time basis in the headquarters, and 340 - on confidential

ones, both at home and abroad<sup>26</sup>), but also to build a new structure. The Department was composed of 11 divisions, including one specializing in the illegal network, three territorial divisions (one for non-European countries, and two for Europe), an emigration division, a scientific-technical division, a Counter-Intelligence division, an analyses and studies division, an operation technique division, a cadres and training division, an administrative division (with files and an archive), and a liaison and ciphers division.

In May 1955 the situation in the security apparatus, including the intelligence, was presented to the Political Bureau of the Central Committee in connection with an appraisal of the reorganization of the whole Ministry, which had taken place at the turn of 1954.<sup>27</sup> In his portrayal of the condition of the intelligence (which in the new structure became known as the First Department), Antoni Alster, chairman of the Public Security Committee (KBP), stressed: the restriction of the network and its insufficient offensiveness *vis a vis* enemy intelligence and counter-intelligence structures and the émigré environments, inadequate activity based on legal posts, unsatisfactory involvement in scientific-technical intelligence work, and the absence of cooperation with the “fraternal services.”<sup>28</sup> The Party leadership “basically confirmed the conclusion formulated in the report,”<sup>29</sup> but a detailed protocol of the session has not survived, or had never been made.

Half a year later, J. Czaplicki prepared for a session of the KBP a copious document entitled *Zakres działania i struktura Departamentu I* (translated: The range of First Department’s activity and structure), and a report about work performed in 1955<sup>30</sup>. The document did not contain many novelties in comparison with the proposals made in the spring, but was more detailed and better arranged. It seems worth drawing attention to the fact that this was the first time when “conducting intelligence work aimed at disclosing and thwarting the hostile activity of the Vatican” was treated as a separate “basic task”..” In this way, the Vatican had been included into a group composed of the United States, West Germany, the United Kingdom and France, listed as sources of the greatest threat to Poland. The heads of the KBP recommended. Greater emphasis on illegal activity (it was proposed to engage a Soviet specialist to introduce assorted improvements) and the penetration of select “particularly neglected” émigré centers. It was also decided to turn to the leadership of the Polish United Workers’ Party (PUWP) with a request for reinforcing the intelligence service by employing party activists in the “N” structures, as well as nuclear physicists “to legally cooperate with abroad”..”

The report accompanying this program document was pessimistic and succinct. The greatest shortcomings were discovered among the personnel: “The people are devoted and willing to work, but have insufficient operation and life experience,” “there are no candidates for residents.” Other problems were caused by the fact that the industry did not make “concrete requisitions” and “delays answering whether the technology to be obtained by us (...) could prove useful.” Czaplicki also admitted that the expansion of illegal activity had encountered a number of obstacles - there were only ten officers functioning at this level. True, the agent network had been rebuilt after the crisis of 1950-1951, but it was still far from impressive: on 1 November 1955 the number of active agents totaled 163 (more than 44 were “frozen”), of whom as many as 92 had been recruited in 1955. Since at the same, time 14 agents had been transferred from Poland, the net was still very new and its considerable part had not been tested. In 1955 as many as 39 agents had been eliminated, which meant that stabilization was still far off. The fact that slightly more than half of the active network was composed of foreigners was correctly regarded as a positive feature. Despite efforts to expand “overseas” work, there were only five agents each in the US and Canada. Czaplicki regarded the most important problem to be the “total lack of work in the USA and England” - in Great Britain only nine agents compared to 22 in France and as many as 56 in the FRG and West Berlin. The report did not make any mention of contacts with the KGB, since they continued to be based on the presence of Soviet advisers in the Polish apparatus (department of intelligence alone had 3-4). No formal agreements or meetings were necessary, and Soviet advisers passed on the information obtained *via* the Poles directly to Moscow.

A successive reorganization of the security apparatus took place in November 1956, and consisted of the incorporation of the KBP into the Ministry of Internal Affairs. This fact did not essentially affect the intelligence service with the exception of certain changes within the cadres: Sienkiewicz returned as head of the Department, while Czaplicki and a group of “old “intelligence functionaries, mainly of Jewish descent, vanished from the Ministry. They had been recognized as guilty of “errors and deviations,” although they had never exceeded Party orders. These changes did not influence the activity of the Department, whose structure remained unaltered. A novelty introduced at this time which was important from the point of view of operation work, was the division into “countries of basic interest” and “auxiliary.” The latter were not a terrain of separate operations, but were used as a base for liaison with the network and for transferring the agents. By way of example, Mexico and Canada were regarded as “auxiliary” countries *vis a vis* the USA, and so were the Netherlands and Denmark in relation to West Germany. The interest in the Vatican meant that the “countries of basic interest” included Italy, since it was obvious that a resident could not be installed in the Apostolic See.

The intelligence service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs entered the “Gomułka era” without encountering any greater obstacles, and the new first secretary, who maintained a certain distance towards the security apparatus, approved the work performed by the Intelligence, especially as regards the German question, the Church and technology. The Department could boast of recent successes among the émigrés. The greatest was indubitably the withdrawal of an agent who at the time of his departure from London proved to be the prime minister of the émigré cabinet, a fact suitably publicized by official propaganda. In turn, the establishment in 1958 of a Committee for Scientific-Technical Cooperation with Abroad by the Council of Ministers made it possible to create permanent and centralized contact with industry and its research hinterland. This accomplishment was of prime importance for coordinating technological intelligence, which was becoming increasingly vital.

The year 1956 marked the beginning of a change in relations with Moscow: the place of the withdrawn advisers was taken by the KGB Liaison Mission in Warsaw, composed of 15-25 officers and technical personnel. Formally, the Mission was part of the Embassy staff and was officially accredited to the Polish Ministry of Internal Affairs.<sup>31</sup> The KGB functionaries enjoyed access to Polish operation officers, and the head of the mission - to the leaders of the PUWP. As far as I have been able to ascertain, this access did not denote acquaintance with the personal data of “the personal sources of information,” agents or officers working abroad. Polish intelligence was always the focus of work conducted by 4-6 Mission officers, and the head of this group (possessing the rank of the deputy head of the Mission) maintained direct contact with the head of the First Department.<sup>32</sup> From that time on, information was passed on while observing formal procedures involving registers and statistics, and suitable conventions were signed at the level of ministries and between corresponding services (in the case of the Polish intelligence this was the First Chief Directorate of the KGB). Similar agreements were concluded also with “fraternal” services. Naturally, it was expected that both Moscow and other capitals would repay by providing information. This is exactly what took place - for instance, in 1960 “friends” were supplied with 867 pieces of information, and provided 417 in return.<sup>33</sup> The Polish mission (the “Wisła” Operational Group), which had been set up in Moscow, was in the hands of the Counter-Intelligence (Second Department) and served only as an intelligence postal box.

Activity abroad progressed systematically: in 1960 there were already 320 registered agents and 109 secret collaborators (who mainly protected diplomatic and trade posts, and they were employees in domestic institutions). Despite all efforts, the agent network remained concentrated on Europe: a mere 11 agents - who, to make matters worse, were described as “of little value” - were installed in the USA, while their number in the FRG amounted to 90, 45 in France, and 32 in the

United Kingdom. Specialists from scientific-technical intelligence worked only in several European resident posts, and the scientific-technical division did not have a single officer in the USA. Consequently, the information about events in "Polish London," which reached desks in the headquarters, exceeded news about, for example, i.e. work at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. On the other hand, significant progress had been achieved not only due to organizational changes (the territorial sections in the technological division had been replaced by a "branch" structure, i.e. nuclear energy or chemistry sections) but also predominately, by contacts between Polish scientists and representatives of industry and the West, which had grown rapidly since 1957. The head of the Department planned considerable expansion, the employment of new officers, and enlarging the cooperation with the research institutes and the industry. The Committee of Scientific-Technical Cooperation with Abroad prepared as many as 340 intelligence tasks for the 1960-1963 period.<sup>34</sup> These ambitious plans fell in ruins or, to put it less dramatically, their realization was hampered for a whole year. Illegal ("N") activity encountered even greater obstacles.

In the late summer of 1960 the Warsaw headquarters received from the KGB alarming information about an act of treason committed in France.<sup>35</sup> A several-weeks long investigation was followed by a statement that the crime had been perpetrated by Captain Władysław Mróz, in 1959 dispatched to an illegal post, for many years engaged in building the "N" net in different countries in Europe, and in the possession of extensive knowledge. The ensuing decision was unprecedented in the case of Polish Intelligence: on October 1960 the defector was shot in the suburbs of Paris. The transference of hundreds of pieces of information by Mróz made it necessary to liquidate the "N" network in France as well as in most other countries. The activity of the whole section was frozen until 1970.

As if this were not enough, on 4 January 1961 Lieutenant Colonel Michał Goleniewski, head of the scientific-technical division, had disappeared. Taking into consideration the accompanying circumstances (i.e. a. the large sum of money he had drawn from the post in Berlin) this fact was immediately classified as treason. Actually, Goleniewski had been anonymously cooperating with the CIA since 1958, and for almost two years supplied the Americans with thousands of pages of Polish and Soviet documents on 160 microfilms.<sup>36</sup> His defection made it necessary to exchange a major part of the agent network, safe houses, secret collaborators at home, as well as numerous officers not only in the division supervised by the defector. Intelligence work was probably additionally hindered by the fact that in the course of two years (1960-1961) 12 "giveaways" in the agent network occurred, more than in the entire 1953-1957 period.<sup>37</sup>

Naturally, the entire responsibility was placed on Sienkiewicz, who on 20 March was recalled from his post and relegated to the margin, i.e. to the office of chairman of the Ministry's "Gwardia" Sports Club. For many months the intelligence headquarters, instead of pursuing current activity, feverishly analyzed procedures, verified cadres and the network, and devised organizational changes.<sup>38</sup> Everyone lived on gossip, rumors and libel, and denounced their colleagues.

Under the supervision of the new director, Colonel Henryk Sokolak, who had been working in the Intelligence service since 1949, the Department rapidly regained its strength: from 1963 the number of employees totaled approximately 600 (of whom almost a half held confidential jobs). I was unable to gather concrete information about the size of the agent network, but it had probably grown. From 1965, "owing to the liquidation of the threat posed" by the World War II veteran emigration, attention was concentrated on Radio Free Europe and the Paris-based "Kultura"; the emigration division was transformed into a division "for combating ideological diversion" and its interests embraced also Sovietological centers. One of its tasks was also to observe "international Trotskyite, Maoist and Zionist organizations."<sup>39</sup> Although such an approach might seem curious, from the ideological viewpoint it was obvious: the heirs of Leo Trotsky and the readers of *The Little Red Book* were treated jointly as groups which could destabilize the situation in the country. It also seems worth

drawing attention to the fact that in 1968 systemic training was restored after a years-long interval, and that at least several score officers graduated annually from the Center for Training Intelligence Cadres, established in 1971.

Owing to the initial stage of my research I cannot present systematic data about the size and structure of the information, and shall cite the example of a single selected report. From 1 October to 31 December 1963<sup>40</sup> the First Department passed on “to the outside”<sup>41</sup> 122 pieces of information defined as “intelligence” (99 came from agents and 23 from “white intelligence”) and 256 pieces of information described as “operational” (all supplied by agents). Most information originated from France (56), the FRG (44), the USA (37), the Vatican (30),<sup>42</sup> Israel (26),<sup>43</sup> the Polish emigration (25) and Great Britain (17). Naturally, almost all the information was passed on to other units of the Ministry (236 mainly to the department of counterintelligence), almost one-third to the head of the Ministry of the Interior, 49 to the Central Committee of the PUWP, 38 to Moscow, and eight to other fraternal services. The “intelligence” information pertained basically to international relations and the domestic problems of particular states. Without analyzing concrete documents it is difficult to assess the proportion between “white intelligence” and the material gathered by the agents, but presumably such information as “The political program of Harold Wilson” or “The domestic situation in France” was based on official publications and the press. In turn - according to the authors of the report, a “large part” of the information described as “operational” concerned “abuses and irregularities in [Polish] foreign trade”..”

At the same time, the First Department passed on more than 30 documents from the scientific-technical section, of which 11 (one third) was forwarded to the Soviet Union.<sup>44</sup> Naturally, the documents included not only those obtained by illegal means, but also those whose gathering did not entail greater difficulties, such as material concerning the Fifteenth Astronomical Congress, which were dispatched to Moscow, or material from the First International Conference of Documentation Experts (handed over to the Criminalistic Bureau of the Citizens’ Militia). Without a detailed analysis of the collected information - and I do not know to what extent the documents have been preserved - it is impossible to judge the quality of the work performed by the Department. One thing is certain, the Polish industry and research centers profited considerably. In the majority of cases, the costs of obtaining technological documentation in this manner were certainly lower than purchasing a license. Furthermore, this was the only way to bypass the embargo imposed by the West on many products and technologies, even those without direct military application. The growing significance of scientific-technical and economic intelligence is testified by the fact that in the mid - 1970s it remained the task of at least five out of the twenty divisions into which the First Department had been divided.

The successes of Marian Zacharski, a young intelligence officer who, while working “under cover” in a Polish-American company (“Polamco”) in 1977-1981,<sup>45</sup> obtained a number of extremely important plans, i.e. a. of the “Patriot” Missile, the “Stealth” aircraft system, the “Phoenix” Missile, and the submarine sonar system, proved to be a veritable “hit”..” As Minister Kiszczak admitted in his memoirs, “even our most outstanding scientists had no idea how to deal with the material supplied by Zacharski, not to mention how to put it to practical use.”<sup>46</sup> A sizable part of the Polish intelligence conquests, probably mainly technological, was passed on from Warsaw further to the East.

The formal scope of intelligence activity, formulated in normative documents, was extremely wide. By way of example, in an instruction added to a ruling issued by the minister on 1 June 1973, the “list of objects, problems and environments” encompassed by “operation interests” is 10-pages long<sup>47</sup> and mentions hundreds of issues: from the cabinets of the presidents and heads of cabinets of all NATO states and international organizations, “Vatican centers”,, scientific institutes (including Sovietological Studies), Radio Free Europe, and the World Jewish Organization to NATO Intelligence and Counterintelligence as well as that of Austria and Sweden. At this early stage of

research I cannot say to what degree, and in what fashion, were those plans implemented. It was certainly impossible to have agent contacts in all the listed institutions, organizations and associations. This was something which neither the KGB nor the CIA could afford to do. In time, the number of problems grew as a result of the course of events in Poland. After the appearance of a democratic opposition and the establishment of “Solidarity”, and especially following the declaration of martial law, new intelligence tasks included penetration of the “Solidarity” emigration, although this was mainly the domain of other departments of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The Polish foreign debt increased the significance of financial institutions and banks. In turn, the critical attitude of the Italian communists towards martial law in Poland inspired the Polish intelligence community to address a new threat: could it be that certain workers' parties and communist parties might be used by the West to weaken the cohesion of the Warsaw Pact? And so they began to compile information on what were, after all, fraternal parties.<sup>48</sup>

In view of fragmentary knowledge it is difficult to propose some sort of a sensible summary. I believe, however, that we may draw the following conclusions:

1. The Intelligence Service in communist Poland achieved operational maturity and organizational stability in the second half of the 1960s. Though the following years witnessed rather numerous instances of restructuring, new tasks emerging, and some of the previous ones disappearing from the agenda, however these changes were by no means primary.

2. Polish Intelligence did not cherish global ambitions. Although the United States became an important field of its activity relatively quickly (already at the end of the 1940s), the intelligence service, for all practical purposes, did not conduct a systematic and wider-scale activity in Asia or Africa, and treated Latin America as an “auxiliary” region. Polish intelligence also did not carry out significant work in such European countries as Spain, Portugal or Greece. Next to the USA and the most prominent European states (including from a certain period also Belgium, but only as the seat of NATO and the “capital of Europe”) interest was focused on Austria and Poland’s “northern flank”, the Scandinavian countries. The Federal Republic of Germany, both from the viewpoint of political questions as well as economic and scientific-technical ones, was the object of special concern. With the exception of a very short time (1945-1948), Polish intelligence did not carry out tasks in any of the communist states.

3. Owing to the internal situation in Poland the range of intelligence assignments relatively early included the Vatican and Israel (and earlier, the Jews in Palestine). The Israeli-Arab conflict initiated operations in the Middle East, and cooperation with Al Fatah intelligence was inaugurated during the 1980s.

4. Throughout its whole existence Polish intelligence was extremely interested in the political emigration although, as I have mentioned, its priorities changed in the mid-1960s. The emigration was always treated as part of the “imperialist camp”, and later as an element of “ideological diversion”.

5. Since the 1960s the most intensely developed domain was scientific-technical intelligence, and with time also the economic field, in a wider meaning of the term. This trend was associated with the development of trade and financial relations (loans) with the West. The amplification of this division necessitated a considerable elevation of the level of the cadre not so much regarding operational skills as professional knowledge. As late as 1989 Polish intelligence, sometimes competing and at other times cooperating with the counterintelligence, penetrated almost all those Polish institutions and organizations which

maintained relations with the noncommunist world, from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Finances to enterprises engaged in road construction in Libya or Iraq and the fishing fleet in the North Atlantic. Such intelligence omnipresence became important “social capital” for its functionaries at a time when Poland was entering the stage of systemic transition. This however, is however already another separate topic, which I will not had not broached on this occasion. Here.

6. From the very beginning to 1989 the highest intelligence decision-making level was the communist party leadership although, with the exception of the years 1948-1956, the leaders of the PUP did not resort to “hand steering”, i.e. designating concrete targets and analyzing intelligence activity. One of the instruments of supervision was the *nomenklatura* system, but only from the head of department upwards. The party organization within the intelligence, similarly as in the whole Ministry, never influenced operational or structural issues. Nonetheless, during certain periods (for instance, in 1956) it could exert a certain impact on the cadres. For all practical purposes, operations functionaries and officers, especially in the intelligence service, were party members and attached prime significance to party loyalty. The party leadership was one of the chief “recipients” of information gathered and compiled by the Intelligence, although I cannot tell to what extent it was subsequently used.

7. From its outset Polish Intelligence constituted a component of a wider configuration, in which the leading role was played by Soviet special services. During the 1945-1956 period the latter enjoyed an opportunity, created by the institution of advisers working inside the Ministry, to exert direct influence on the tasks formulated for the intelligence service and to intervene. During the successive period this impact was formalized and regulated by means of assorted agreements, which did not alter the configuration of forces between the First Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the First Chief Directorate of the KGB. The second period witnessed the existence of official channels of permanent liaison with the intelligence services of other countries, but I am unable to say whether, and to what degree a “division of labor” had been defined within the whole socialist intelligence community. The closest contacts were maintained with Stasi. Joint operations were certainly undertaken together with the Soviet and East German intelligences, but I have been unable to gather detailed information on this subject.

---

<sup>1</sup> With the exception of the specific 1947-1950 period, I do not discuss Army Intelligence, which was part of the structure of the General Staff of the Polish Army. Leszek Głuchowski has examined this topic separately. Civilian Intelligence functioned within the structures of the Ministry of Public Security (MBP, 1945-1954), the Public Security Committee (KBP, 1954-1956) and finally - to May 1990 - the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MSW).

<sup>2</sup> Henryk Dominiczak *Organy bezpieczeństwa PRL, 1944-1990* (Security Organs in the People’s Republic of Poland, 1944-1990), Warszawa: Bellona, 1997. The Intelligence is also ignored in the collective work published just before the fall of communism: *Ochrona bezpieczeństwa państwa i porządku publicznego w Polsce 1944-1988* (The Protection of State Security and Public Order in Poland 1944-1988, ed. T. Walichnowski), Warszawa: Akademia Spraw Wewnętrznych, 1989.

<sup>3</sup> By way of example, I have recently published two documents (*Wywiad /cywilny/ PRL w 1955 r. / Intelligence [civilian] in the People’s Republic of Poland in 1955/*, in: *Zeszyty Historyczne*, no. 150, 2004, pp.129-153); i.e. a. Leszek Pawlikowicz also used the IPN archive: *Tajny front zimnej wojny. Uciekinierzy z polskich służb specjalnych 1956-1964* (The Secret Front of the Cold War. Defectors from the Polish Special Services, Warszawa: Rytm, 2004) or Maria Pasztor: *Gry wywiadów a stosunki polsko-francuskie w latach 1956-1968* (Games Played by the Intelligence Services and Polish-French Relations in the Years 1956-1968; a 17-pages long typescript). Pawlikowicz based himself mainly on material from the inquests and trials (by default) of 11

---

defectors, among whom only two were functionaries of the civilian Intelligence (one worked for the Counter-Intelligence of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the others - for Army Intelligence).

<sup>4</sup> E. g. Henryk Bosak's *Werbownik* (Recruiter, Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza A-M, 1992), *Rezydent z Genewy* (Resident from Geneva, Warszawa: BGW 1995), *Wnuk generała* (The General's Grandson, Warszawa: Wyd. Jaworski, 2000) and *Oficer centrali* (The Headquarters Officer, Warszawa: BGW, 1996).

<sup>5</sup> Mr X [Janusz Kochański], Bruce E. Henderson, C. C. Cyr, *Double Eagle: The Autobiography of a Polish Spy Who Defected to the West* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merill, 1979)

<sup>6</sup> Who was described the most frequently, i.e. a. Guy Richards, *Imperial Agent. The Goleniowski-Romanov Case*, New York: Devon-Adair, 1966. Other books deal with, i.e. a. Paweł Monat of Army Intelligence or the celebrated Józef Światło (Stewart Steven *Operation Sprinter Factor*, Philadelphia: J.B.Lippincott, 1974), who worked not for Intelligence but for the security apparatus; the latter book is, in my opinion, totally based on confabulation.

<sup>7</sup> Born in 1906, no higher education, prior to 1939 a middle-rank communist activist, arrested upon several occasions, spent the war in the USSR, from 1943 - a political officer in the Polish Army; after the war, next to work in Intelligence (1945-1947), the MBP and the Ministry of National Defence (MON) (1948-1950) he was also, i.e. a. editor-in-chief of the central press organ of the Communist Party (1947-1948), vice-minister of transport, ambassador to China (1950-1951), and chairman of a Party publishing house; died in 1973.

<sup>8</sup> In those years greater importance than to the MBP was attached to the Second Division of the General Staff. The latter had at its disposal Polish Military Missions in such towns as West Berlin, Paris, London or Rome; mission officers enjoyed relatively easier access to numerous large concentrations of Poles and fulfilled all the functions normally entrusted to attaché's offices.

<sup>9</sup> IPN, MBP, vol. 2284.

<sup>10</sup> Born in 1909, member of the leftist Jewish organization Hashomer Hatsair, from 1925 member of a communist youth union, as a teenager participated in assassinations (carried out on Party orders) of secret collaborators of the political police; in 1927 transferred to the Soviet Union, trained at Red Army courses in sabotage, joined the Communist Youth International; in 1936-1939 fought in the Spanish Civil War (i.e. a. as commander of the J. Dąbrowski Polish Battalion), from 1939 in the Polish Army in France, took part in the French campaign, in German captivity to April 1945; from 20 December 1945 - head of the Second Division, in 1950 transferred to the post of Chief Quartermaster of the Polish Army, arrested in November 1952, released in December 1954; from August 1956 - commander of the Internal Security Corps of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, later (to February 1968) - general director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Died in 1972.

<sup>11</sup> Owing to the presence of Soviet advisers in the Ministry of Public Security and predominantly Soviet officers in Polish Army structures, it seems impossible that the Soviet authorities did not express their consent to such unification. We cannot exclude the eventuality that the merge was their own initiative.

<sup>12</sup> IPN, MBP, 1945. At this time, however, the Seventh Department was enlarged and gained, i.e. a. a passport and visa section.

<sup>13</sup> IPN, 00267/27. I am not certain whether these data pertain only to the Seventh Department or also to Second Division agents.

<sup>14</sup> IPN, 0298/848.

<sup>15</sup> IPN, 0298/848. Ships sailed to southern Albania.

<sup>16</sup> According to a list from 17 June 1948 the Polish Army and MBP storehouses supplied, i.e. 4, 500 machine-guns and 4 mln pieces of ammunition, eight radio stations (of American make), 26 tons of field-hospital appliances, mortars, TNT, etc. - IPN, 352/67.

<sup>17</sup> Archive of New Acts (AAN), KC PZPR, 2750.

<sup>18</sup> IPN, 0298/900.

<sup>19</sup> A name given to Polish participants in the Spanish Civil War.

<sup>20</sup> A popular, pejorative description (in Polish "sitwa") of officers of the Polish Legions who during the first world war fought under the command of Józef Piłsudski. The legionnaires played a key role in the Army and political life after the May 1926 coup d'état.

<sup>21</sup> Born in 1920 in Wilno, the first head of Intelligence of Polish descent, never graduated from secondary school, employed as a worker with no prewar contacts with the communist movement. Joined the KComsomol in 1940, after the incorporation of Lithuania into Soviet Union; in 1941, referred to the General Anders Army but escaped for ideological reasons and joined the Red Army where he was trained in sabotage; from July 1942 fought in the Soviet partisan movement and edited a periodical issued in Polish; after the war worked in the Party apparatus in Lithuania. Dispatched to Poland in the autumn of 1946, and until his appointment to the MBP worked in the Party apparatus. Died in 1990.

---

<sup>22</sup> IPN, 0649/3. The persons discharged included both workers of the headquarters and functionaries acting as residents, such as Marcei Reich-Ranicki, later a celebrated German literary critic, from 1944 a functionary of the MBP, who since 1948 worked “under cover” as a consul in London.

<sup>23</sup> IPN, MBP, 2284.

<sup>24</sup> IPN, 02241/16.

<sup>25</sup> IPN, 0649/3.

<sup>26</sup> IPN, MBP, 2284.

<sup>27</sup> In December 1954 – i.e. a. owing to the facts disclosed by the defector Lieutenant Colonel Światło, and publicized by Radio Free Europe – the MBP was dissolved and replaced by a separate Public Security Committee (KBP) and a Ministry of Internal Affairs (MSW). These changes also led to a discharge of the minister and three out of four vice-ministers. Heads of the Committee worked collectively and Sienkiewicz was appointed one of the Committee members. He was replaced as head of intelligence by Colonel Józef Czaplicki, an MBP functionary since 1944, previously engaged in combating pro-independence and anti-communist conspiracies.

<sup>28</sup> IPN, 0298/806.

<sup>29</sup> *Centrum władzy. Protokoły posiedzeń kierownictwa PZPR. Wybór z lat 1949-1970* (Center of Power. Protocols from the Session of the PUWP Leadership. Selection from the Years 1949-1970), ed. A. Dudek, A. Kochański, K. Persak, Warszawa: ISP PAN, 2000, p. 141.

<sup>30</sup> These are the documents cited in my publication mentioned in note 4.

<sup>31</sup> The first head of the mission - Colonel Georgiy S.Yevdokimienko - was familiar with Polish conditions since from September 1954 he was the chief Soviet adviser in the Ministry of Public Security.

<sup>32</sup> See, i. a. Krzysztof Dubiński, Iwona Jurczenko *Być szpiegiem* (To be a Spy), Warszawa: MIK, 1994, pp. 243-245.

<sup>33</sup> IPN, 0649/3

<sup>34</sup> L. Pawlikowicz *Tajny front zimnej wojny...*, p. 245.

<sup>35</sup> For details about the whole case see: *ibid.*, pp. 164-175.

<sup>36</sup> Details – *ibid.*, pp. 215-300.

<sup>37</sup> IPN, 0649/3.

<sup>38</sup> In January 1962 an uproar of another sort followed the arrests of 43 persons accused of illegal trade in gold: 13 of the implicated men were employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs who acted as diplomatic couriers (and, simultaneously, couriers of the gang) and thus for the First Department. The most disturbing fact was they were by no means freshly recruited functionaries: all were party members (one of the accused had been even a member of the underground Polish Workers’ Party) and the most recently employed began working in the Ministry in 1951. The status of a diplomatic courier was the dream of every lower-ranking functionary who longed for a per-diem allowance paid in foreign currency (and an opportunity to travel all over the world). The greatest criminal scandals involving intelligence, not only couriers but high-rank functionaries, took place at the beginning of the 1970s and ten years later. In both cases, the agent network and operation potential had been used for the purposes of large-scale smuggling and illegal trade. True, the profits were supposed to replenish the Department resources, but a considerable part had never been accounted for. In addition, the felonies had been perpetrated with the assistance of common criminals who committed larceny, armed assault and probably murder. Some of the functionaries, including a vice-minister, were sentenced.

<sup>39</sup> IPN, 02241/16.

<sup>40</sup> IPN, 02241/16.

<sup>41</sup> There are no data about the total number of obtained information since the reports took into account only the information passed on beyond the Department.

<sup>42</sup> This was the period of the Vaticanum II debates, hence the copious information from the Vatican. The majority related to Polish bishops.

<sup>43</sup> From the very outset of the Jewish state, Israel remained one of the most important objects of interest of the Polish intelligence. This task was rendered easier by the fact that up to the great exodus of Jews from North Africa and, subsequently, from the Soviet Union, Jews from Poland constituted a significant group and many of them belonged to political and military elites. I was unable to examine this question, but presumably the interest stemmed from, i.e. a. contacts between Israel and the USA. It is also difficult to exclude the eventuality that a special role was played by traditional anti-Semitic stereotypes of the “Jews rule the world” variety.

<sup>44</sup> I.e. documents concerning “aluminum and armored steel welding technology”, “chemical treatment of the picture tubes used by the Phillips works” or “topological spatial configurations and the fixed-point theory” (and thus the domain of mathematics). Moscow highly assessed material about the apparatus of a flight simulator.

---

Upon other occasions, Soviet “friends” were supplied with data concerning “magnetic-hydrodynamic reactors” and “the outcome of research into the neutron spectra in the net of the Swedish RI heavy-water reactor” (ibid.).

<sup>45</sup> Arrested in October 1981, and sentenced to life imprisonment on 14 December, a day after the declaration of martial law in Poland, although, obviously, not in connection with that event. In 1985 exchanged for 25 spies from several communist countries, since Poland alone did not have a suitable “equivalent”..” Zacharski continued his intelligence career even after 1989.

<sup>46</sup> Witold Bereś, Jerzy Skoczylas *General Kiszczak mówi... prawie wszystko* (General Kiszczak Tells ... Almost All) Warszawa: BGW, 1991, p.188

<sup>47</sup> IPN, 01738/8.

<sup>48</sup> IPN, MSW II, 01096/155.